

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1032

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, U.K. (N.I.)

SUBJECT: SECSTATE REES UNDER FIRE HINTS CONVENTION NOT LAST WORD

REF: (A) BELFAST A-86 DEC. 18, 1974 (B) BELFAST 204 DEC. 2, 1974.

1. LOCAL PRESS SEPT. 21 AND 22 CARRIED EXTENSIVE EXCERPTS FROM ADDRESS GIVEN BY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND MERLYN REES AT ASSOCIATION FOR ULSTER SOCIETIEIS IN CARDIFF SEPT. 20. REES (A) RULED OUT INTEGRATION OR INDEPENDENCE AS FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVE TO AGREED POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, (B) REITERATED THAT GOVERNMENT "WILL NOT ABDICATE ITS RESPONSIBILITIES," (C) PAID TRIBUTE TO GROWING SECURITY COOPERATION FROM GOVERNMENT IRISH REPUBLIC WHICH HAD MADE CLEAR, HE REPORTEDLY SAID, THAT IT DID NOT SEEK ANY JURISDICTION OVER NORTHERN IRELAND, (D) DEFENDED POLICY OF RELEASE DETAINEES AS BEING FORWARD LOOKING (E) DENIED EXISTENCE OF ANY DEAL WITH PROVISIONAL IRA SAYING CEASEFIRE WAS NOT GOVERNMENT CEASEFIRE BUT THAT OF PROVISIONALS. IN POSSIBLE HINT OF FUTURE TACTICS REES REPORTEDLY EMPHASIZED ULTIMATE POLITICAL DECISIONS COULD ONLY BE TAKEN IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND IS QUOTED AS SAYING "WE HAVE GIVEN THE POLITICIANS THERE A CHANCE TO LOOK AT THE FUTURE. IF THEY DO NOT EXERCISE THIS OPPORTUNITY NOW THEY OR THEIR SUCCESSORS WILL HAVE TO IN THE

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END."

2. WEEKEND ALSO FEATURED REPORTING ON RENEWED DEMAND BY SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY CONVENTION MEMBER PADDY DEVLIN THAT REES BE REPLACED (REFS). DEVLIN SUGGESTED POSSIBLE ACCEPTABLE CANDIDATE WOULD BE ROY JENKINS OR SOMEONE SIMILAR "WHO COULD KNOCK OUR HEADS TOGETHER" TO GET POLITICAL AGREEMENT. DEVLIN ACCUSED REES OF MAKING "12 POINT DEAL" WITH PROVISIONAL IRA AND DISCREDITING ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES TO BENEFIT OF PARAMILITARY ORGANIZATIONS.

3. IN OTHER POLITICAL EVENTS: (A) NORTHERN IRELAND LABOUR PARTY (NILP) AT ANNUAL MEETING BELFAST RESOLVED FOR SWIFT CREATION NORTHERN IRELAND PARLIAMENT, COALITION CABINET WITHIN THAT PARLIAMENT AND IMMEDIATE ESTABLISHMENT SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC COMMITTEES TO ADVISE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ON REALISTIC POLICIES TO DEAL WITH PRESENT EMERGENCY. DAVID BLEAKLEY, ONLY NILP REPRESENTATIVE IN CONVENTION, CALLED FOR PROVINCE WIDE REFERENDUM ON POWER-SHARING. BLEAKELEY HAD EARLIER SUGGESTED THAT WITH UNITED ULSTER UNIONIST COALITION (UUUC) AND VANGUARD UNIONISTS DIVIDED, LOYALISTS NO LONGER HAD ABSOLUTE MAJORITY IN CONVENTION. (B) VANGUARD LEADER WILLIAM CRAIG ANNOUNCED LATE SEPT. 19 THAT HE WOULD RESIGN AS DEPUTY LEADER UUUC. HE WILL PRESUMABLY PURSUE ATTEMPTS RALLY VANGUARD BEHIND HIS POLICY EXPLORE INCLUSION MINORITY PARTIES IN EMERGENCY COALITION GOVERNMENT.

4. PROVISIONAL IRA STIRRING UP BORDER AND IN PUBLIC RELATIONS AREA. ARMED MEN PLACED LARGE BOMB IN HIJACKED VAN AND FORCED DRIVER TO PROCEED TO ARMY CHECK POINT ONE MILE FROM BORDER IN SOUTH ARMAGH. DRIVER ALERTED TROOPS WHO EVACUATED AND BOMB EXPLODED WITHOUT CASUALTIES. BELFAST BRIGADE PROVISIONAL IRA DECLARED SEPT. 20 PROVISIONAL TRUCE WITH BRITISH ARMY AND GOVERNMENT DID NOT EXTEND TO ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY (RUC). PROVISIONALS ACCUSED RUC OF TORTURING SUSPECTS IN BELFAST CASTLEREAGH POLICE STATION. RUC SENSITIVE TO SUCH ACCUSATIONS SINCE DETECTIVE CONVICTED LAST WEEK OF SEVERELY BEATING IRA SUSPECT IN COOKSTOWN LAST WINTER.
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